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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE · WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

35TH YEAR

SEPTEMBER 11, 1978

Food Prices:

Fourth Quarter 1978

Relatively stable food prices are expected in the fourth quarter of 1978 in the market place, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture economists. Seasonably lower farm prices in the fall will help balance the food prices which peaked in June. Total production of all meats--slightly down in some areas but up in others--means supplies are little different from last year.

Turkey prices are strong with a wholesale price perhaps 15 percent above last year (on the 8-16 pound turkey), but seasonal specials may off-set even this.

Retail coffee prices are expected to decline in the fourth quarter despite some temporary dislocation in green (wholesale) prices resulting from minor damage due to frost in mid-August in Brazil.

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The September supply situation:

Red meats:

Beef--adequate, but production rates to average 4-6 percent below year earlier.

Pork--adequate, supplies to increase seasonally.

Poultry and eggs:

Broiler-fryers--plentiful.

Turkey--adequate.

Eggs--plentiful, output about 2 percent above a year earlier.

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Home Canning TOMATOES



When canning tomatoes, be sure to process them for the right time and at the right temperature, say home economists of USDA's Science and Education Administration (SEA).

Proper times for raw pack are 35 minutes for pint jars and 45 minutes for quarts. For hot pack, 10 minutes is sufficient for both pints and quarts. Processing should be in a boiling water bath at 212 degrees Fahrenheit.

"Be sure to can only firm, ripe, red tomatoes," says biochemist Michael J. Pallansch. "Don't use overripe tomatoes, because they have less acid than is needed to make canning them safe. If overripe tomatoes are canned, there is a chance that deadly toxin-producing bacteria will grow in the jar."

Tomatoes with soft spots or decayed areas should not be canned either, Pallansch says.

More information on home canning can be found in "Home Canning of Fruits and Vegetables," Home and Garden Bulletin Number 8. Single free copies are available from the Publications Division, Office of Governmental and Public Affairs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 20250.

FOOD CLIPS

Jelly is....made from fruit juice; the product is clear and firm enough to hold its shape when turned out of the container. Jam is....made from crushed or ground fruit, tends to hold its shape but usually is less firm than jelly, according to USDA home economists.

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Conserves and jams, made from a mixture of fruits, usually include raisins and nuts. A marmalade usually contains citrus fruit. Preserves are large pieces of fruit in a thick sirup--sometimes the whole fruit is slightly jellied.

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There are four essential ingredients in making a jellied fruit product---fruit, pectin, acid and sugar.

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Fruit gives each product its characteristic flavor and furnishes at least part of the pectin and acid required for successful gels.

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Often some kinds of fruit have enough natural pectin to make high quality products.

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Jellied home-made fruit products are at their best when used within a few months because they tend to lose some of their flavor quality in storage.

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FOOD PRICES (CON'T.)

Milk and dairy products:

Adequate, although supplies tightening; milk production running lower and fluid milk sales higher than 1977, so less milk going into manufactured dairy products. Butter and non-fat dry milk production down from 1977; cheese production starting to increase.

Fruits, vegetables and nuts: Summer fruit supplies decreasing in Sept.

Peaches: still adequate.

Plums, nectarines: light.

Apples, Bartlett pears: adequate.

Grapes: plentiful.

Canned peaches, pears, and fruit cocktail: adequate.

Grapefruit juice: plentiful.

Orange juice: light.

Cantaloupes and honeydew melons: plentiful.

Dried prunes and raisins: adequate.

Processed vegetables: adequate.

Fresh potatoes and onions, peanuts, rice, wheat, corn, dry beans, and dry split peas: plentiful.

ABOUT YOU 'N' ME

"A Communications Extravanganza", sponsored by the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sport and the Dairy Council of Greater Metropolitan Washington, will be held Wednesday, Sept. 20, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Holiday Inn (Georgetown, D.C.) Contact person: Ellen Radeloff (202-986-9113)...Betty Ashton elected vice president of Sigma Delta Chi (Society for Professional Journalists). She is also a member of American Women in Radio and Television.